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from slate to lilac-gray in tint, and predominate in the larger specimen. In the smaller and darker one, both styles of markings are about equally distributed. The two kinds of spots vary considerably in size and shape.—CHAS. E. BENDIRE, *Washington, D. C.*

The Old-squaw (*Clangula hyemalis*) in South Carolina.—On the 30th of December, 1887, I was informed by my friend, Mr. Henry Hunter, that he had shot a pair of 'Long-tailed' Ducks, in Charleston Harbor, and, in fact, within a few rods of the Sea Wall of the Battery. I at once went with him to his house to see the birds, but to my dismay, I found that the cook had been ahead of me, and the picked bodies and severed heads were gravely spread before me. From the heads I identified the mortal remains as, beyond a doubt, those of *Clangula hyemalis*. Upon my representing to Mr. Hunter the rarity of the bird so far to the south, he promised to keep a close watch and try and procure another, and on the 16th of January, 1887, sent me word that he had a specimen for me. This, like the former, was shot within a hundred yards of the city, and during a mild spell of weather, though it had been quite cold. The Duck was a female and lacked the lengthened tail-feathers. It was not fat, but was in fair winter plumage, and is the only Duck whose head I have been able to draw through the skin of the neck. The specimen is now in my collection. On January 20, Mr. Hunter wounded a male 'Old Wife' (a *lucus a non lucendo*), which he said had a very long tail. The bird dove, and owing to the extreme roughness of the water he was unable to see anything more of it. There had been three of them swimming together. The same gentleman informs me that a few winters ago, in about 1883, his brother stood in his yard, which faces the water, and shot a specimen of *Clangula hyemalis* that was feeding in the shallow water near by.

The Ducks in Charleston Harbor during the winter come very close to the Sea Wall around the Battery, and I have frequently seen the Lesser Black-head, the Buffle-head, the Grebe, and once a fine male Golden-Eye, so close that I could distinguish the iris, or in military parlance "see the whites of their eyes."

I think that this will prove the most southern record of *C. hyemalis*, as yet; at least I can find none other so far south.—ELLISON A. SMYTHE, JR., *Charleston, S. C.*

Surf Scoter (*Oidemia perspicillata*) in Kansas.—I would like to record the first appearance in this State, of the Surf Scoter (*Oidemia perspicillata*). The specimen was shot by myself above the dam across the Kansas River at Lawrence, Kansas, Oct. 29, 1887. The bird was not in company with any other Ducks. It is a young male, with the characteristic large bill with two round, horny plates on the side near the base. The two loreal and auricular white patches are well defined; below dusky black; rest of plumage black or nearly so. The bird is mounted and in my collection. The following are the measurements: Length, 18.88; extent of wings, 32.60; wing, 9.25; tail, 2.98; tarsus, 1.81; middle toe and claw, 2.96; chord of culmen, 1.60; bill along gape, 2.38.—A. L. BENNETT, *Lawrence, Kan.*

Note on *Rostratulinæ*.—It would appear that Vieillot instituted the genus *Rostratula* in 1816, before Cuvier proposed *Rhynchæa* for the same Painted-snipe, though the former name has never become current. These Snipes are peculiar in several respects, and especially in those secondary sexual characters for which the female is conspicuous, among which are the tracheal convolutions. In any system which recognizes several families of charadriomorphic birds, such characters would seem to be of more than generic value.—ELLIOTT COUES, *Washington, D. C.*

The Wild Turkey in Massachusetts.—When a pupil of the Public Latin School in Boston in 1837-38, I spent a portion of my summer vacations in Northampton. I distinctly remember conversing with some of the town's people at those times in regard to the existence of a flock of Wild Turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) which had frequently been seen in the neighborhood of Mount Holyoke. I was much interested in the circumstance, which even then was deemed very unusual.

These birds had the range of a large tract of wild mountainous country, in some parts almost inaccessible and impassable, lying at the base of and comprising Mount Holyoke, and to the southwest also including Mount Tom and its surroundings. An incident occurring at this period serves to show the character of this district. A stranger ascended Mount Holyoke to enjoy the view from its summit. In descending he missed the path, and becoming bewildered, wandered away into the forests at the base. Here he passed two or three days before he succeeded in extricating himself in a famished condition, and having upon his person only a small portion of the holiday attire in which he ascended the mountain.

I am unable to state the exact period at which this flock became exterminated, but should say that it must have been in 1840, or thereabouts.

My friend, Mr. J. A. Allen, has kindly given me the following references on this subject, which I have looked up.

Hitchcock in his 'Geological Report of Massachusetts,' 1883, says, "Wild Turkeys are frequently met with on Mount Holyoke." In the same volume, Dr. Ebenezer Emmons, in his list of the birds, says, "The Wild Turkeys have now become scarce and nearly extinct."

In a communication to the 'Bulletin' of the Nuttall Ornithological Club (Vol. I, 1876), Mr. J. A. Allen says, "According to John Josselyn the Wild Turkeys began early to decline." This author, writing in 1672 ('New England's Rarities') says, "I have also seen three score broods of young Turkeys on the side of a marsh sunning of themselves in a morning betimes, but this was thirty years since, the English and the Indians have now destroyed the breed so that it is very rare to meet with a wild Turkey in the Woods, but some of the English bring up great stores of the wild kind which remain about their Houses as tame as ours in New England."

Thompson, in his 'History of Vermont,' says, under date of 1842, "A few of the Wild Turkeys continue still to visit and breed upon the mountains in the southern part of the state."

In a communication to the 'Proceedings' of the Essex Institute, under